

## Unusual heavy landings of triggerfish

V. Mahesh, K. P. Said Koya, P. Ansar and T. Rajesh Babu

Calicut Research Centre of ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Kozhikode – 673 005, Kerala

The Red-toothed triggerfish *Odonus niger*, belonging to the family Balistidae, is known as “Puzhthi” in local parlance in Kerala. Small quantities seasonally form part of the low value bycatch (LVB) in trawlers, gill netters, ring netters etc. operated in the 40 to 80 m depth zone along the south-west coast. The maximum



Fig. 1. *Odonus niger* landed at Calicut.

quantity recorded at Calicut in 2017 was 600 kg per trawler during September – October period. However, unusually heavy landings of the same was observed during the post monsoon period of 2018. The average catch recorded during September and October 2018 was 3 tons per trawler. Considerable quantities were landed during the period by the ring net operators also. Squids and trevallies also were landed in very high quantities by the trawlers during these months with other major resources being ribbon fishes, bullseyes, threadfin breams and mackerel. The volume of *O. niger* was as high as 90% of the LVB landings during some weeks of September and October 2018. They were mostly immature whose size ranged from 9 to 21 cm in total length (TL) and weighed 18 to 98 g each. Maximum numbers were observed in the 10-12 cm size group whose price varied from ₹10-15 per kg and were utilised for making fish meal.



Fig. 2: Landings of *O. niger* at Puthiyappa Fisheries Harbour, Kozhikode